

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are all the claims pending in the application. All the claims stand presently rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Simonoff et al (US Patent No. 6,043,815). By this Amendment, Applicant amends claims 1 and 5, and cancels claim 3.

Formal Matters

Applicant notes that the present Office Action does not indicate whether or not the formal drawings filed on April 12, 2002, are acceptable. Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to clarify this point.

The Rejection of Claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The present invention is directed to the field of operator communication and monitoring systems for an automated production plant using a Human Machine Interface (HMI) system (page 1, ln. 13-15).

Fig. 1 of the application shows an exemplary system that utilizes a plurality of thin clients 10. A server 12 is provided for maintaining a control program, which is preferably an operator communication and monitoring program used for process control in an automated production plant. The server 12 displays parallel, multiple instances of the control program, which are released and installed over a local area network (LAN) onto the clients 10 with each

initialization of the network. In a preferred embodiment, the control program is "WinCC" (Windows Control Center, developed by Siemens AG), a supervisory control and data acquisition HMI application used for operation in an automated production plant environment (page 3, ln. 11-25).

An important aspect of the present invention is based on deploying parallel, multiple instances of the control software. The various Terminal Server Clients 10 establish contact with the Terminal Server 12, which releases and installs respective copies of the control software. Except for the small Terminal Server Client Software and the operating system (which both come down from the server 12), no other software is installed on the client computers 10, and so the software does not have to be reinstalled or maintained, unless the network is reinitialized. In this way, the available software and the software to be maintained for all clients 10 is only installed and upgraded on the server 12 (page 4, ln. 7-14).

Amended independent claim 1 is directed to a method of independent process control, which comprises, among others, the steps of providing an automated production process control program on a network server and deploying a plurality of parallel instances of the (automated production process) control program to a respective plurality of thin client terminals over a network.

Fig. 2 of the Simonoff reference shows a computer system 1 having servers 100a-100n; combat subsystems 200a-200m, which can be radar systems, status boards, etc.; and computers 300a-300r, which can include desktop computers, laptop computers and/or workstations in any

mix. All of the servers 100a-100n, the combat systems 200a-200m, and the computers 300a-300r are connected to one another via a communications link 400, which is preferably a local area network (LAN) (col. 7, ln. 57, to col. 8, ln. 26).

Preferably, multiple ones of the clients 300a-300r illustrated in Fig. 2 may be connected to an intermediate Application Server running on a server host 100, shown in Fig. 3 (col. 9, ln. 24-42).

A detailed discussion of the start-up sequence of the computer system 1 can be found in, e.g. col. 9, ln. 43, to col. 10, ln. 67 of the Simonoff reference. For example, in step 1 shown in Fig. 4, the client host 300 establishes communication with the server host 100. More specifically, a JAVA-enabled web browser operating on the client host 300 connects to a web server running on the server host 100 via the LAN 400. Step 1 is completed when the web page with an embedded Universal Client device is selected (col. 9, ln. 43-56).

During step 2, the web page including the Universal Client device and any associated GUIScript is downloaded from the server host 100 to the web browser running on the client host 300 via the LAN 400. After the Universal Client device has been downloaded to the client host 300, the Universal Client device initializes and runs. During initialization, the Universal Client device searches for HTML code in the downloaded web page to determine if the Universal Client device has been given GUIScript parameters (col. 9, ln. 57-66).

When the universal client device on client host 300 runs, it will connect to the Application Server running on the server host 100 and load and interpret a GUIScript file, which

defines all the display windows and their operation for the application running on application host 200. The Universal Client device will then display the appropriate GUI to the user. The user can then run the application via the Universal Client device, which will transfer data to the application via the intermediate Application Server running on server host 100 (col. 9, ln. 24-42).

There is, however, no teaching or suggestion in the Simonoff reference that an automated production process control program (i.e., a program that controls the process of automated production of something) is provided on the server 100, contrary to what is recited in amended claim 1. Consequently, there is no teaching or suggestion in the Simonoff reference that a plurality of parallel instances of the (automated production process) control program are deployed to the computers 300a-300r over the link 400, contrary to what is recited in amended claim 1.

Rather, as discussed above, the Simonoff reference merely discloses that there are web pages located on the server host 100, which include a Universal Client device and any associated GUIScript, which is downloaded from the server host 100 to the web browser on the client host 300. In addition, the user can run an application via the Universal Client device, which will transfer data to the application via the intermediate Application Sever on the server host 100.

It is unclear, however, how this disclosure has anything to do with providing a program on the server host 100 that controls an automated production process, as indicated in amended claim 1. By the same token, since no such program is provided on the server host 100, there is

no disclosure of deploying parallel instances of such a program to the client host 300, as is also indicated in amended claim 1.

The citation given by the Examiner (namely col. 17, ln. 5-7) in support of such an alleged teaching merely discloses that “the Universal Client device can be configured to automatically connect to a machine running a needed application without user interaction.” However, again, this disclosure has nothing to do with providing a program on the server host 100 that controls an automated production process, as indicated in amended claim 1.

For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that amended independent claim 1 is patentable over the prior art made of record. The dependent claims are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 1.

Conclusion

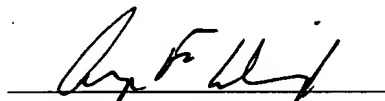
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
US Appln. No. 09/812,205

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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